

City of Santa Barbara
COVID-19 Business Advisory Task Force
May 22, 2020 Meeting Summary

- Many of the Business Advisory Task Force members were able to join and participate in the meeting with City staff.
- Mayor Murillo opened the meeting recognizing the recent actions of Council and staff in relation to the outdoor dining effort.
- Nancy Anderson with the County provided an overview of the County's Reopening Guide being approved by the Governor, website information that was available to assist businesses and efforts being made to allow outdoor dining in County areas.
- City Administrator Paul Casey reviewed how the State and County Public Health orders now allow Santa Barbara retail and foodservice businesses to reopen with social distancing parameters. Mr. Casey also highlighted the Council's emergency order directing him to open State St. as a pedestrian promenade that would also allow for outdoor dining, not only there but in other public right of way locations throughout the City. He stated that Council was set to receive an Emergency Economic Recovery Ordinance on Wednesday, May 27, that would formalize the use of the right of way and additionally allow outdoor dining on private property and City property for adjacent foodservice businesses.
- Jason Harris with the City noted that the City was also organizing a training to walk foodservice businesses through the ABC permitting process and hand-delivering applications directly to ABC in Ventura.
- Jason gave an overview of the three committees' discussions.
- Barrett Reed, a member of the Task Force's Regulations and Permitting subcommittee, gave an overview of that committee's recommendation for ten process improvements to the plan-check process. There was collective discussion of support, frustration that similar lists had been developed and submitted in the past to no avail, and agreement that the City will need to improve the processes to address substantive vacancies. The Task Force recommended to include a recommendation for the Council to create an ad hoc committee to evaluate the design review regulatory processes and ensure their recommendations are enacted.
- Task Force member Miguel Avila with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Co-President Jacqueline Inda presented their organization's efforts to support small businesses as they reopen and recommended that the City evaluate allowing businesses to pass out information on State St. and consider closing San Andres St. for food and craft vendors.